

# First combat training scenario of Victory Strike II takes to the air

**By Spc. Robert Barker**  
29th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Helicopters at Ziemsko Airfield took to the air Tuesday in their first combat training scenario of this year's Victory Strike II exercise.

Soldiers from Bravo Troop, 6th Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, lifted off in Apache attack helicopters with hopes of destroying the capabilities of a simulated enemy.

"The exercise is extremely challenging, but essential to gain the proficiency required to conduct an Apache deep strike mission," said Capt. Jim Reed, assistant regimental intelligence officer, 11th Aviation Regiment. "It is a reflection of today's modern enemy."

"This is the best training we do because we have the opportunity to oppose air defense artillery systems," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Darren Freyer a pilot with Bravo Troop.

The pilots are essential to the exercise, but so are many others who keep it running safely and securely. Spc. Pieter Devisser is an intelligence analyst who provides information about enemy positioning to the pilots.

"It is a good opportunity to do my job," said Devisser. "It is a good training tool, because it is as close to war as you can get, without actually being at war."

Mechanics are also key personnel who keep the skies safe in this exercise. They prepare the copters for flight by doing routine preventive maintenance checks and taking fuel samples among other duties. They can also repair most anything on site, either with unit or intermediate-level teams.

"About the only time (a chopper can't be fixed on site) is if there's battlefield damage,"

said Sgt. Gabe Loftin, a Bravo Troop crew chief. Most everything we can handle at our level."

To help record the battle play of Victory Strike, the teams have also installed the critical Smart Onboard Data Information Modules (SMODIMS) and Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (MILES) Aegis II systems on the aircraft. The systems record the electronic "hits" made by or on the aircraft during force-on-force exercises. Nearly all of the MILES systems, which take a day each to

mount, were installed prior to Victory Strike, Loftin said. The SMODIMS, which take a few hours, were mounted at Ziemsko.

"It's our opportunity to showcase our skills," said Loftin's fellow crew chief Pfc. Sam Walker. "The Apache is a 'hide-and-get-them' aircraft, also known as the tank killer.

"They are tough to maintain," Walker said, but added, "We help keep them running so the pilots can concentrate on plotting routes and flying the copters."



Photo by Spc. Robert Barker

**A crew chief signals to pilot Chief Warrant Officer 2 Darren Freyer, Bravo Troop, 2nd Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment pilot, to lift off from Ziemsko airfield during a two-day deep strike training mission that ended yesterday.**

# U.S., Polish military police officers work together to keep exercise areas secure

**By Pfc. Jon Soucy**  
29th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

The soldiers of the 212th Military Police Company from Ansbach, Germany have been working closely with MPs of the Polish army during this year's Victory Strike II exercise, and both sides have been benefiting from the experience.

"The Polish MPs are very professional, and trained basically the same way we are," said Staff Sgt. Leonard Chanler, a desk sergeant with the 212th.

"They don't have the same assets that the U.S. has. The Polish army is very small. But they put forth what is needed to get the job done," said Chanler.

2nd Lt. Carrie Wibben, a platoon leader with the 212th, had similar things to say about the Polish MPs.

"They get frustrated like we do when things come up at the last minute, but they always give 110 percent," said Wibben.

While the soldiers of the 212th provide much of the security for convoys moving through the training area, as well as perimeter and roving security guards for units involved in the exercise, the Polish MPs provide escorts for all hazardous materials travelling through the training area.

"According to the agreement between the U.S. and the Polish government, any hazardous material — fuel, ammunition, oversized vehicles — requires the presence of a Polish MP," said Chanler.

But for many of the soldiers, both Polish and American, the experience of working with each other goes beyond professional interaction.

Pvt. Robert Ambroziak, an MP in the Polish army, said that it is very exciting working with the U.S. MPs.

"This is my first contact with American soldiers," he said through a translator.

"I'm getting a chance to work



Photo by Pfc. Jon Soucy

**While patrolling the perimeter of the ammunition supply point, Sgt. James Hiatt gets a call concerning a Polish citizen picking mushrooms in an unauthorized area. Pvt. Michael McFarland listens as Hiatt responds to the call.**

on my English," he added — in English, with the translator helping him to choose his words.

Sgt. James Hiatt, a squad leader with the 212th, said that he enjoys working with the Polish MPs.

"They're funny, (and) we

have a good relationship with them," he said.

Wibben illustrated the Poles' sense of humor by describing a picture one of the Polish MPs drew for their American peers.

"It's a Humvee chasing Osama bin Laden," she said.

## Victory Strike II Northern Area Worship Services

### Friday Oct. 5, 2001

Jewish	4 p.m.	Ziemsko Airfield Dining Facility
	7:30 p.m.	Jaworze Fest Tent

### Saturday Oct. 6, 2001

Catholic	10 a.m.	Ziemsko Airfield Dining Facility
	7:30 p.m.	Strike CP Dining Facility

### Sunday Oct. 7, 2001

Catholic	9:30 a.m.	Jaworze Dining Facility
	10 a.m.	Ziemsko Airfield Dining Facility
	4 p.m.	Oleszno (Catholic Church)
	6 p.m.	Karwice Recreation Room
	8 p.m.	22nd Signal Bde. Dining Facility
Latter-Day Saints	11:30 a.m.	Ziemsko Airfield Dining Facility
Protestant	8:30 a.m.	Ziemsko Airfield Dining Facility
	10:30 a.m.	Jaworze Dining Facility
	11 a.m.	22nd Signal Bde. Dining Facility
Gospel style	1 p.m.	Ziemsko Airfield Dining Facility
Protestant	4 p.m.	Oleszno (Catholic Church)
	6 p.m.	Karwice Dining Facility
	7 p.m.	Jaworze Fest Tent
	9 p.m.	Strike CP Dining Facility
	9:30 p.m.	Ziemsko Airfield Dining Facility

## Victory Strike II Protestant Bible Studies

Bible studies are conducted at noon and 7 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday at the Ziemsko Airfield Dining Facility.



V Corps Commander: Lt. Gen. William S. Wallace  
V Corps Public Affairs Officer: Lt. Col. Joseph Richard  
Commander, 29th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment: Maj. Carolyn McGee

### VANGUARD STAFF

Editor: Bill Roche	Photojournalist: Spc. Robert Barker
Photojournalist: Sgt. Brent Hunt	Photojournalist: Pfc. Jon Soucy
Photojournalist: Sgt. Paul Disney	

VANGUARD is an authorized publication for participants in exercise Victory Strike II. VANGUARD is published under the supervision of the V Corps Public Affairs Office to provide exercise participants with news and information on the people, events, policies and operations of, and associated with, Victory Strike II and the exercise's host nation, as well as current world affairs. The contents of VANGUARD are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government or the Department of the Army. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the V Corps Public Affairs Officer.



# Aviator 'three-pack' trains for extractions

**By Sgt. Brent Hunt**

V Corps Public Affairs Office

Buzzing the treetops of the Polish countryside at a 120-knot clip, a Blackhawk helicopter of the 236th Medical Company (Air Ambulance), 12th Aviation Brigade from Landstuhl, Germany, sails through the air getting oriented with the lay of the land.

"This is an orientation flight for a medical evacuation from the Ziemsko Airfield to the Walcz Hospital," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Rick Knowlton, pilot-in-command.

The pilots compared landmarks on the map to what they were seeing from the air to route their trip to the Polish 107th Army Hospital in the town of Walcz. The pilots use lakes, towns, towers, bridges and even a cemetery as landmarks.

"When you see the cemetery just before the hospital, that is your slow-down point. It can be clearly seen in the day and every grave is lighted up at night with candles. It's the most visible thing out here and that is why we use it," explained Knowlton.

The pilots mapped a route to the hospital and then marked specific areas that could be used as landing zones for rescuing a downed aircraft deep behind enemy lines.

The air ambulance team is part of a 'three-pack.' The 'three-pack' consists of three helicopter teams, each with a differ-



Photo by Sgt. Brent Hunt

**Pilot 1st Lt. David Turner (left) and Chief Warrant Officer 3 Rick Knowlton, pilot-in-command, both from the 236th Medical Company (Air Ambulance) of Landstuhl, Germany, conduct a reconnaissance flight over the Victory Strike II training area near Drawsko Pomorski.**

ent purpose. The first team consists of eight infantry soldiers for security when a downed aircraft needs to be recovered. The second team is a medical evacuation team, and the third team is for command and con-

trol, the decision-makers who monitor the battle and have direct contact with V Corps.

"Today's orientation flight must be completed before the 'three-pack' can start its mission," Turner added.

## For some, training in Poland is a homecoming

**By Pfc. Jon Soucy**

29th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

For soldiers participating in Victory Strike II, the exercise is a chance to train with soldiers of other nations. But for some soldiers of the U.S. Army, it is also a chance to visit home.

Sgt. Edyta Verdejo, an automated logistical specialist with A Company, 32nd Signal Bn., a native of Wroclaw, Poland, said she has had nothing but positive experiences in the exercise.

"I feel outstanding," said Verdejo. "High-ranking people are coming in and asking for my help. I love it. I feel right at home."

Verdejo, who has served in the Army for five years, said she admired women in uniform, and that for as long as she can remember she has wanted to join the Army or the police force.

"Every time I saw a woman in uniform I always felt a lot of respect and admiration, and I always wanted to be like her," said Verdejo. "I've always liked a challenge, and the Army was something I wanted to try."

Verdejo chose to join the U.S. Army because at the time women were not allowed to serve in the Polish army.

For Capt. Brett H. Pyrdek, an ammunition supply point control

officer with the 529th Ordnance Co. who was promoted Monday, Poland was an interesting backdrop to his promotion ceremony.

"My great-grandparents came from Poland," he said, speaking about his family history.

"On my grandmother's side, we know where the family is from, but on my grandfather's side, we're not sure."

Pyrdek is from Chicago, a city with a Polish population larger than most cities in Poland. He said while here he hopes to explore where his family is from.

"The first day I was here I ran into a (Polish army) military police captain and he said he had

two soldiers under him with my last name," he said.

"In Poland, my last name is not a very common name. He said the soldiers are on a rotation to Kosovo and that when they get back he'd try and get us together."

But for now, Pyrdek is satisfied just to be in Poland.

"It's incredible being here," he said. "It's incredible seeing food being made that my grandmother used to make, food that you don't see everywhere," he said describing his most memorable experience in Poland.

"But," he said with a laugh, "It's still not as good as my grandmother's."

## News clips

**Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld** is on a Mideast tour that will take him to Saudi Arabia, Oman, Egypt and Uzbekistan in the next few days.

**The Senate's oldest member, Strom Thurmond** of South Carolina, is recovering after the 98-year-old lawmaker fell ill on the Senate floor Tuesday.

**Rodney King, whose videotaped beating** by police officers led to the 1992 Los Angeles riots, pleaded innocent Tuesday to a charge of being under the influence of PCP.

**U.S. investors could refocus on corporate warnings** now that the Federal Reserve has gone through with its widely expected interest rate cut, the bank's ninth this year.

## Sports

**Randy Wolf allowed three hits** in eight innings, Bobby Abreu hit a two-run homer and the Philadelphia Phillies beat the Braves 3-1 Tuesday night to pull within one game of Atlanta in the National League East.

### Baseball box scores for Oct. 2, 2001

#### NATIONAL LEAGUE

Expos 3  
Marlins 4  
Pirates 10  
Mets 1  
Phillies 3  
Braves 1  
Reds 5  
Cubs 4  
Giants 4  
Astros 1  
Cardinals 5  
Brewers 1  
Rockies 1  
Diamondbacks 10  
Dodgers 5  
Padres 2

#### AMERICAN LEAGUE

Blue Jays 3  
Orioles 4  
Twins 5  
Tigers 0  
White Sox 4  
Yankees 6  
Red Sox 3  
Devil Rays 10  
Indians 1  
Royals 5  
Mariners 14  
Angels 5  
Rangers 4  
Athletics 9

## Weather

**Today:** Partly to mostly cloudy with possible scattered showers. Low temperatures in the mid- to upper 40s, highs in the low to mid-60s.

**Tomorrow:** Partly cloudy with possible scattered showers. Low temperatures in the mid- to upper 40s, highs in the upper 50s to mid-60s.

(Weather reports are based on an average of forecasts for Berlin, Germany and Warsaw, Poland.)

# News Roundup

## Taliban leader calls opponents traitors, threatens death penalty

The head of Afghanistan's ruling Taliban, Mullah Mohammed Omar, has warned that anyone supporting an opposition government, including one headed by the country's former king, will be considered traitors punishable by death.

A leader who in the past had rarely spoken publicly and has never been seen on camera, Omar cast himself as a representative of the nation's people bent on preserving the Taliban's Islamic customs.

He said Afghans need to look after their religion and to not let U.S. involvement in "our affairs" destroy Islam. He warned against reinstating former Afghan

king Mohammed Zahir Shah or any form of government to replace the Taliban.

He accused the king of inviting Communist occupation of Afghanistan that resulted in the deaths of 2 million Afghans, and he said those who back the king would have no right to complain if he is again the leader and tragedy befalls the nation.

The former king has said he is willing to return and head a new Afghan government.

Anyone who supports any anti-Taliban government "will be accused of treason" — an offense that could result in the death penalty, Omar warned.

## Taliban denies bin Laden sighting

Reports have surfaced that Osama bin Laden had been sighted in the town of Jalalabad some two weeks ago, but the Taliban say they are shuffling the suspected terrorist around the country.

Meanwhile, in Taliban-controlled eastern Afghanistan, residents have been questioning the Taliban's decision to continue harboring bin Laden and risk U.S. military strikes. Some Afghans are also wondering if bin Laden is working on his

own, and not under Taliban control.

The Taliban's ambassador to Pakistan, Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef said they were willing to negotiate with the United States on bin Laden's handover, if they were provided with evidence that linked him and his al Qaeda network to last month's attacks on the United States.

Without proof of bin Laden's involvement in the attacks, he said the Taliban cannot hand him over to the U.S.

## Letter to help with late payment fees

**HEIDELBERG, Germany (Oct. 3, 2001)** -- The head of the military mail system has distributed a letter asking creditors to exempt overseas soldiers and civilian employees from late fees on payments delayed by the reduced flow of military mail to and from Europe as a result of the terrorist attacks in the U.S.

The letter is signed by Maj. Gen. Kathryn G. Frost, executive director of the Military Postal Service Agency. Copies of

the letter can be obtained at Army post offices, consolidated mailrooms and battalion personnel offices.

Officials caution that the letter does not automatically cancel the late fees. The letter explains to creditors that the late payment is the result of delays in military mail, and asks the creditor to exempt the debtor from the fees.

(Courtesy U.S. Army Europe Public Affairs Office)